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the file of consideration of the Government and for how long and how many of them were subsequently rectified after this adventure?"

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI:—"This has nothing to do with the strike. The hon. Member is probably confusing the question with another thing. This is a question of statistical gathering of all information as to quite a different set of cases, viz., neglect of duty, desertion, receiving illegal gratification, etc."

SRI N. K. PALANISAMI:—"During 1946 about 40,000 police constables struck work in U.P. for higher salaries and certain privileges and their demands were met afterwards. Why in this City alone . . ."

MR. SPEAKER:—"This question is about departmental arrangements and not about strikes."

Agencies for supplying medicines to Government hospitals.

* 779 *Q.*—SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) who are the agencies for supplying medicines to Government and Local Boards' Hospitals and dispensaries;

(*b*) whether it is a fact that 50 per cent of the allotment to each medical institution is spent on packing and freight, etc.; and

(*c*) what steps the Government have taken to see that the expenditure on packing and transport is reduced?

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"(*a*) The main source for obtaining the medicines required for Government, Local Fund and Municipal Medical Institutions is the Medical Stores Depot, Madras. In the case of medicines which could not be obtained from this depot, they are purchased from local markets subject to safeguard regarding quality and price.

"(*b*) No.

"(*c*) The necessity for considering this question has not so far arisen."

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI:—"What is the percentage spent on packing, etc., for medicines bought from the Medical Stores Depot, Madras?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"It is not a fact, Sir, that 50 per cent is spent on packing, freight charges, etc. The expenses on these 2 items is only a small proportion. For instance the headquarters hospital at Salem last year purchased medicines from the Medical Stores Depot, Madras, worth Rupees 1,73,998 and the total expenditure incurred on packing, freight charges, etc., was only Rs. 4,538."

SRI S. NARAYANAPPA:—"Sir, the Medical Stores Depot is supplying medicines to all the headquarters hospitals and also to

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the hospitals maintained by the local bodies. May I know, Sir, whether the Government have any control over the Medical Stores Depot?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"Sir, the Medical Stores Depot is a Central Government institution. Since the last eight months, the Medical Stores Depot is meeting promptly the indents placed on them and is sending about 90 per cent of the indents."

DR. K. B. MENON:—"The purchase of medicines involves a huge amount. What is the method the Government adopts in the selection of the company from which these medicines are bought? Is there a system of calling for tenders?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"As I said, Sir, about 90 per cent of the medicines required by the various institutions are supplied by the Medical Stores Depot. As regards medicines which could not be got from the Medical Stores Depot, they are got from reliable firms."

SRI A. APPU:—"Have the Government received complaints that several kinds of medicines received from the depot are of bad quality and are, therefore, ineffective?" 9 a.m.

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"I have said that since the last eight months there has been a very great improvement in the supply. There have been no complaints about the quality of the drugs supplied."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP:—"Inasmuch as the Medical Stores Depot was the creation of war emergency and the quotations of the institution are on an average much higher than the quotations in the open market, might I ask why the local bodies with meagre resources, should be compelled to make their purchases from the Depot?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"Even when the Medical Stores buy medicines in the open market, they supply such medicines on a no profit and no loss basis."

SRI R. KRISHNAN:—"May I know, Sir, who are the agencies for supplying medicines for the Ayurvedic dispensaries in the district boards; do the doctors send their indents to those agents or to any special department created for this purpose?"

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"I suggest that a separate question may be asked, Sir."

SRI V. K. RAMASWAMY MUDALIYAR:—"Might I ask, Sir, if the State Government will take over control of the Medical Stores Depot inasmuch as they have no control over this department and much delay is caused in the supply of various medicines to the local board and Government hospitals and dispensaries."

THE HON. SRI A. B. SHETTY:—"It was so in the past, Sir, and I have already stated that for the last eight months, there has been a very great improvement and defects have been rectified to a very great extent."